

## Remarks in El Paso, Texas March 21, 2002

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. So, Laura and I were heading down to Mexico, and we decided to stop to see a lot of our friends. And there's no better place to see a lot of our friends than El Paso, Texas.

I want to thank you all for coming out. I want to thank you for being here. As you know, I had a change of address, but my home is still Texas. I love to be with my fellow Texans, and I'm really happy that Laura came with me today. As you know, she's doing a great job as First Lady.

I'm a lucky man to have Laura as a wife. Some people are wondering how lucky she is to have me as a husband. [Laughter] But I attribute the fact that she has done such a fabulous job to this: Every summer when she was a kid, she came to El Paso, Texas.

I'm also honored to be traveling today with a fantastic Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Colin Powell has cobbled together one of the great coalitions ever, a coalition determined to fight terror wherever we find it. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your love for America; thank you for your love for freedom; and thank you for your service to this country.

You know, when the enemy hit us, I knew we needed a strategy to protect our homeland. We needed a strategy to—something to put in place to do the very best we can to protect our citizens. And I turned to a friend of mine to lead the strategy, the former Governor of the State of Pennsylvania, a strong leader, a capable man, a Vietnam vet, Tom Ridge.

I'm proud to be on the stage with a man who's doing a fabulous job for the people of Texas, the Governor of the State of Texas, Rick Perry. And I was proud to travel from Washington, DC, back to his home territory with a fine Congressman,

a man who understands the border, a man who loves Texas, Henry Bonilla.

We've really come for more than just to see our friends. We've come down to highlight the importance of our border and the importance of our relationship and friendship with Mexico. First, I want to make this clear—somebody asked me the other day—they asked this question. They said, "Because of the war on terror, have you—is your interest in Mexico diminished?" I said, "Not at all." A strong and prosperous Mexico is good for America. And the best foreign policy is a foreign policy that insists that our own neighborhood be prosperous and peaceful and democratic.

Mexico is an incredibly important part of the *futuro de los Estados Unidos*. And the border, *la frontera*, is a very important part of our relationship. It is essential that Americans understand the nature of this border. And that's why I'm going to be going to a border crossing point to make this point: On the one hand, we want the legal commerce, the people who travel back and forth on a daily basis, the brothers and sisters on both sides of the border, the relatives that have been coming back and forth for years, to be able to do so in an efficient and easy way. We want that kind of traffic, that kind of border crossing to be done in an expeditious way. It's good for Juarez, and it's good for El Paso, Texas.

Rick mentioned the amount of commerce that takes place. The commerce that takes place between Mexico and Texas and the United States is good for both countries. It's good for the United States; it's good for Mexico. And therefore, we must work to make sure our border is modernized so that the commerce that takes place can move more freely, can be expedited so as it makes it easier for people to have jobs and find work.

On the other hand, we want to use our technology to make sure that we weed out those who we don't want in our country, the terrorists, the "coyotes," the smugglers, those who prey on innocent life.

And so we're making good progress in the modernization of our border. And that's what I'm going to go talk about today, and that's what I'm going to highlight. I want this border to be modern. I want it to have the very best technology. I don't want it to be a neglected part of our country. I want it to be a place where we spend a lot of time and focus on it, so that it works the best it can possibly work.

It also is important for our country to understand how I feel about our neighbor to the south. First of all, I approach Mexico with the spirit of friendship and the spirit of mutual respect and the spirit of resolve. I want to thank the Mexican leaders—and will do so in person tonight—for their steady and strong resolve in their efforts to join us in our fight against terror, in our efforts to join us in the fight against drug cartels, in our efforts to make sure our relationship is as hopeful and as together as possible.

And so today I've sent up an emergency request to the United States Congress of \$27 billion, \$5 billion of which will be spent on our airports and on our borders, to make sure Americans are more secure and more safe than ever before.

My most important job as your President is to protect Americans from any attack. I think about this all the time. I walk into the Oval Office every morning, and I sit at this fantastic desk that Teddy Roosevelt sat at and that Franklin Roosevelt sat at, John Kennedy sat at, Ronald Reagan sat at. These are—imagine what it feels like for a fellow from Midland, Texas. It's an honor. But every morning I read about potential threats to America. And I take them seriously, and so should we all. And that's why we're working hard to make the border work better. That's why we're working hard to beef up our Coast Guard, so that our

ports are more secure. That's why we take every single threat seriously.

If we get any kind of hint, any kind of nudge that the evil ones may be coming after us, I can assure you we're reacting. We're sharing information the likes of which we've never shared before. Our country's on alert, and our governments, the Federal, the State, and the local governments, are doing everything we can—I mean everything we can—to protect the homeland.

But I want you to know how I feel. The best way to protect the homeland, the best way to make sure Americans can grow up in a peaceful country, is to find terrorists wherever they hide and bring them to justice. And that's what we're going to do.

We're in for a long struggle. And I think Texans understand that, and so do Americans. We're a united people. We're a resolved people, because we understand that we fight for something we hold dear, and that is our freedoms.

Sometimes it seems like the terror threat may be going away, but all you've got to do is look on your TV today, be reminded about how evil these murderers are. Today we had a terrible suicide bombing in Israel, and innocent lives were lost. And there was one in Peru yesterday, where people lost their life. And this morning Laura and I met Milton Green and his son, who lost a wife and a mother when they were going to church, when they were praying to the Almighty God, and a suicide killer came in in Pakistan and took their lives.

This is a dangerous world. Too many people are losing their lives to murderers. History has called us into action. We cannot let the terrorists take over freedom-loving societies, and we will not.

America will fight terror wherever we find it, and as well we will call upon leaders around the world to do so as well. Mr. Arafat must do more to stop the violence in the Middle East. And I want to assure you all, the Secretary of State and I will remind leaders of their obligation to defend

innocent people, of their obligation to stamp out terrorists wherever they light, of their obligation to make sure they uphold this doctrine: If you harbor a terrorist, if you hide a terrorist, if you feed a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorists themselves. And if you're interested in knowing what that means, just ask the Taliban. Thanks to our mighty United States military and thanks to our vast coalition, we upheld that doctrine.

But I'm proud of this: Our country and our friends do not seek revenge; we seek justice. And we sent brave, brave U.S. soldiers into Afghanistan not as conquerors but as liberators. It may be hard for some of the youngsters here to believe, but the government that we just routed in Afghanistan would not let young girls go to school. That changed. This week young girls will be going to school for the first time, because we got that barbaric regime out of power.

And we're not stopping. And we're not stopping. And that's why I submitted the largest increase in defense spending in two generations to the United States Congress. We can't afford to stop, for the sake of our children and our grandchildren. And I expect the United States Congress to honor my request for this important reason: Anytime we put a U.S. soldier into harm's way, we expect that soldier to have the best equipment, the best training, an additional pay raise.

I know it's a lot of money. I know it's a lot of money, my request, but let me just tell you this: I want to remind you all, we fight for freedom. This country stands strong for freedom, and we will not relent to any terrorists who think they can take our freedom or the freedom from anybody else in the world away from us. And therefore, the budget I submitted to Congress, while it may be high, the price of freedom is never too high, as far as I'm concerned.

I ask for your patience and unity because I understand the nature of the enemy we

fight. They've got these leaders over there that are willing to send youngsters to their suicidal death, and they try to find a cave they can hide in. There's no cave deep enough for American justice.

It doesn't matter for me how long it takes. It doesn't matter how long it takes. We're going to hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice. If they bunch up again in Afghanistan like they did in the Shahi-Kot Mountain Range, we'll send our soldiers in there. The last time they bunched up, they didn't like the results. No matter where they light, we're going to get them. We're going to treat them for what they are, international terrorists. And we're going to keep them on the run.

It is in the interests not only of our country but the interest of the world that our Nation be steady and strong and determined. And you can bet, so long as I am your President, we will be determined and steady and strong and defend our freedom with all our might.

I believe this: I believe as a result of our being strong and steady and determined, the world will be more peaceful after we rout out these terrorist killers. I believe we have a chance to solve some problems around the world that some people had given up hope on. I believe that the United States, by leading our coalition, can lead the world to a more peaceful tomorrow. And that's my goal, and that's my dream. Out of our strength and out of our resolve will come a peaceful tomorrow for children who not only live in America but children who live all across the world.

And I want to tell you one other thing I believe about America is, out of this evil will come some incredible good. I believe strongly that the evil ones didn't know who they were attacking. They thought we would—they thought we would roll over. They thought we were so materialistic and self-absorbed that we wouldn't respond. They probably thought we were going to sue them. [Laughter] Not only did they

not understand our resolve, but they didn't understand that this Nation is not going to let evil prevail.

They understand—I get asked all the time—I want you to hear me on this—I get asked all the time by people around America, “What can I do to help in the war on terror?” I'll tell you what you can do. In order to stand squarely in the face of evil, do some good. Love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. Reach out to somebody in need. Make sure somebody who's hungry has food, somebody who needs love has love, somebody who needs to be taught how to read is taught to read. You see, it's the gathering momentum of millions of acts of kindness that will define this Nation and allow us to stand squarely in the face of evil.

And there's no doubt in my mind that the good people of El Paso, Texas, and those who live at Fort Bliss are going to do exactly that. I know El Paso. I know the hearts and souls of the citizens who live here. I know full well the love and compassion that exists throughout the neighborhoods in this great city in this part of the State.

Today I had the honor of meeting Rosario Piedra. She brought her whole family. [*Laughter*] She came out to see this magnificent Air Force One. She was there because Rosario is the kind of person I'm talking about. She takes her obligation as a U.S. citizen very seriously. She knows there's something more to life than just serving yourself. She's in charge of Girl Scout troops, teaching young girls values that will stay with them for the rest of their life. She works after-school programs to help children that need a little extra

help. It is this kind of citizen that makes our country unique and different.

I want to share with you this thought, that the most meaningful event of September the 11th, in many ways, was Flight 93. I want you all to remember what took place. On that flight were people who had been told on their telephones that Washington and New York was under attack. They knew their plane had been hijacked. They got on the plane, and they told their loved ones they loved them. They said a prayer. They said, “Let's roll,” and they served something greater than themselves. They served humanity. It is that spirit of sacrifice, it is that spirit of serving something greater than yourself that is alive and well and strong in our great land.

And as you love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself, remember that you represent that spirit; you represent the best of our country; and you join us all in standing squarely in the face of evildoers. This great country is the finest country on the face of the Earth, and we're going to show the world exactly that.

And so I want to thank you all. Laura and I love El Paso. We love our friends. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. at El Paso International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Milton Green, whose wife, Barbara, was killed in the March 17 terrorist attack at the Protestant International Church in Islamabad, Pakistan, and their son, Zachary, who survived the attack; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting  
Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Requests  
March 21, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider expeditiously the enclosed requests, totaling \$27.1 billion, for emergency FY 2002 supplemental appropriations. The requests provide for emergency expenses to support the war on terrorism, homeland security, and economic revitalization activities as the Nation continues to recover and rebuild following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

I hereby designate specific requests contained in the accompanying material as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended. By category, these emergency requests total:

- Defense: \$14.0 billion
- International: \$1.6 billion
- Homeland Security: \$3.3 billion (excludes \$1.9 billion in a contingent appropriation for the Department of Transportation)
- Assistance to New York: \$5.5 billion

The emergency funding requests include a total of \$2.7 billion in budget authority

that would be made available contingent upon my transmittal of later budget requests to the Congress designating the specific amounts requested as an emergency requirement. This contingent budget authority includes \$1.9 billion allocated to the Department of Transportation for the Transportation Security Administration and \$750.0 million allocated to the Department of Labor for economic recovery and assistance to dislocated workers.

This transmittal also contains \$240.0 million in non-emergency requests that are fully offset by proposed reductions.

All of the requests in this transmittal are for the purpose of fulfilling a known and urgent FY 2002 requirement and are unable to reasonably be met through the use of existing agency funds.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Interview With TCS  
March 20, 2002

*El Salvador-U.S. Relations*

Q. Ten years after the peace agreement in El Salvador, how do you evaluate the current relationship between the U.S. and my country?

*The President.* *Muy fuerte.* I've got, first of all, a good personal relationship with *El Presidente de su pais*. He's a very good man. He's a young, strong leader, and I'm

impressed by him. And everybody in America who's met him is impressed by him.

Secondly, I believe we've got some great opportunities. There's a lot of people from your country living here in America, and so we get a better sense of your country from them—hard-working, good people. Secondly, obviously we've had a chance to cooperate during some of the unbelievable